III.—CHANGE IN THE HOURS OF SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

MR. SPEAKER :—" To-morrow! Hon. Member should know I have already extended the time-limit in response to their request. I have also to announce to the House that the House will sit from to-morrow (5th January 1954) from 9 a.m. to 1-30 p.m."

* DR. K. B. MENON :—" Apart from the fact that we want some extension of time for submission of amendments, I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister and the Hon. Speaker that according to Rule 93 of the Assembly Rules, fifteen days are allowed for Members to study the Bill. In view of the fact that the Malabar Tenancy Bill is a very . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—" But the time-limit can be waived by the Speaker."

* DR. K. B. MENON :—" In view of the fact that the Malabar Tenancy Amendment Bill is a controversial Bill, I would suggest that the time for consideration of the same be postponed till the end of the session so that parties may be given enough time to discuss with their members and arrive at conclusions. A little more time for submission of amendments may be permitted."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" On a point of information, Sir."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Is it on this subject? "

* SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" I will supplement the arguments so ably advanced by the two hon. Members. Some of us are not Malabarians. We do not know anything about Malabar, much less its tenancy."

MR. SPEAKER :—" So I would advise the hon. Member to keep quiet. (Laughter.)

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" While I appreciate the sentiments expressed by you, Mr. Speaker, all the same I have the right as an hon. Member of this House . . ."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Nobody denies the hon. Member's right."

* SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" As a member of this House, I have a right to speak on this Bill. As a matter of fact I can speak on any Bill that comes up before this House for discussion. I might contribute some sane arguments for the improvement of the Bill now under discussion, viz., the Malabar Tenancy Amendment Bill. So I crave your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, to extend the time-limit for submission of amendments at least till to-morrow evening."

* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I am making this appeal to the Members who are raising these points. This matter has been pending for a long time. There is a universal demand that it should be disposed of soon. We had a Joint Select Committee and all matters were thrashed out by Members who

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were interested in the same. If only hon. Members could apply their minds to it, they could draft the amendments more quickly. There is no doubt about it. Regarding the request for extension of time by the hon. Member leading the Praja Socialist Party, viz., Dr: K. B. Menon, for consultation among partymen in regard to this Bill, may I point out that the Joint Select Committee in fact heard the views of all parties interested in this Bill including Mr. Kelappan. In fact, only after hearing all their views, we have arrived at fairly agreed conclusions. I think if we delay, the House will be opening itself to the charge of improper delay of a very important matter."

* THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" May I also add that copies of the Report were distributed even on the 30th December 1953 to the hon. Members at their residences in Madras and despatched to their mufassal addresses."

MR. SPEAKER :—" There were holidays after the 30th December."

* THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Every attempt has been made to supply copies of the Report to hon. Members as early as possible. As already pointed out by the Hon. the Chief Minister, when this Bill was originally introduced here, it was discussed thoroughly and then only referred to a Select Committee. Therefore, we should remember that this matter has been before us for a long time. The Joint Select Committee has made some changes. We have got to approve of it. Therefore I would support the Hon. Chief Minister in saying that we need not postpone the consideration of this measure."

MR. SPEAKER :—" They want time only for submission of amendments."

SRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN :—" Are we meeting at 9 o'clock from to-morrow onwards? If that is so, I would submit that it will cause great inconvenience to us. We cannot get ' iddlies ' ready by that time, Sir." (Laughter.)

MR. SPEAKER :—" It is because the other House is meeting simultaneously."

* DR. K. B. MENON :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are not trying to postpone consideration of this Bill. We are placing our difficulties before you and asking you for extension of time-limit so that if extension is granted we might participate more effectively when the Bill comes up for discussion. We had no time to study the Report of the Select Committee. I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Chief Minister that even our request to be supplied with four copies of the parent Act (Malabar Tenancy Act, 1929) has not been complied with. We have not been supplied with copies of the parent Act. As such it is not possible for us to follow certain of the amendments in the present Bill, which have a bearing on the parent Act. I would request that at least in respect of those clauses of the present Bill which have a bearing on the parent Act,

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copies of the relevant portions of the mimeographed parent Act may be supplied to us, so that we might participate effectively when the subject comes up for discussion. Let not the Hon. Finance Minister or Chief Minister think that we are trying to postpone consideration of an important measure.''

THE HON. SRI K. P. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR :—'' About the supply of the parent Act to hon. Members, let me inform Dr. K. B. Menon that we got it specially printed for this purpose and got it distributed to all hon. Members.''

MR. SPEAKER :—'' It has been distributed to hon. Members. In fact let me inform Dr. K. B. Menon that some hon. Members came to me and told me that they had received copies of the parent Act.''

RAJA MUTHIAH CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD :—'' Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some observations with reference to the announcement just now made, namely, that the Assembly will meet from 9 a.m. tomorrow onwards. This question raises an important issue. It affects the privilege of hon. Members of this House. In fact, I might say, it even affects the rights of the House. It has been our custom for a very long time to meet at a convenient hour, namely, from 11 a.m. and sit till 5 p.m. Sir, it has been announced to suit the convenience of members of the Upper House and Hon. Ministers, the Assembly will sit from 9 a.m. to 1-30 p.m.

'' Sometime ago there was a doubt in the minds of hon. Members of this House whether the Upper House should exist at all. I am not one who would say that the Upper House should not exist. I feel the Upper House may exist so long as the Lower House tolerates it because this Lower House has been asked on a previous occasion to give its verdict whether the Upper House should continue or not. (Cheers.) Therefore let it be understood that this House is the sovereign body. (Cheers.) After all, Sir, the question involved is the question of location of the Legislature. If our Legislative Assembly moves into the old building at Fort St. George, the Legislative Council could move into the Committee Room there. Then it would be very easy for Hon. Ministers and it may not be difficult for them to attend both the Houses even though both Houses may sit simultaneously. Of course, that is a matter on which you, Mr. Speaker, cannot give a ready ruling for you have to write to the Government whether it would be possible for this House to sit in the Old Chamber and whether the Upper House could sit at the Committee Room. It may take sometime before any final decision is reached. All the same, there is not much of a difficulty so far as Hon. Ministers are concerned. We have now twelve Ministers and I do not think it would be difficult for them to allocate the work amongst themselves and attend both the Houses if both the Houses are to meet simultaneously. I think, Sir, it amounts to infringing our fundamental right, our privilege, to deviate from the practice of sitting from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Our timings cannot be reduced to school-level of 9 a.m. to 1-30 p.m.

(Laughter.) We have got so many other urgent businesses to attend to in the morning and this kind of asking us to meet at 9 a.m. will cause us great inconvenience. (The Hon. Chief Minister was seen rising to answer.) Of course the Hon. Chief Minister will give an answer to every question. I hope and trust he will take into account the feelings of hon. Members of this House in this regard. It is of course true that he will give us a convincing answer. But, all the same, let me tell the Hon. Chief Minister that the fixing of question-hour between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. will not only serve no useful purpose but would become a farce. I am sure that all the hon. Members might not be present at the House at that early hour. We may have a thin House. Hon. Members may not have sufficient time to put supplementaries. It will cause great inconvenience to us. In this connexion, I may bring to your notice, Mr. Speaker (perhaps you may be aware of it) that when the Legislature began to function in Madras, answers to starred questions of hon. Members used to be printed and depatched to the concerned hon. Members. It used to be circulated to all hon. Members. That was the practice previously. But when Mr. Rajagopalachari took over the Chief Ministership of this State in 1937, he adopted the practice of the Parliament (that is what he said) of reading out the answer to the questions in the House. The old practice of supplying printed answers was discontinued. So much so, if an hon. Member who had put a starred question was not able to be present in the House, he could not know what answer the Hon. Minister gave. Perhaps he must read the newspapers or the official report. That is the practice obtaining now. Inasmuch as the old practice had been discontinued, hon. Members do not have the requisite time to put supplementary questions. They do not know the answer previously. They must come to the House in time, hear the answer of the Hon. Minister and then put supplementary questions. When this is the sorry state of affairs at a time when we are meeting at the reasonable hour of 11 a.m., hon. Members may imagine what sort of difficulty we would be put to if we are asked to meet at the early hour of 9 a.m. in the morning Asking us to come at 9 a.m. amounts to an infringement of our right to meet at the reasonable hour of 11 in the morning.

"As a result of questions and supplementary questions on important matters only, we will be able to decide whether we should raise the question of half-hour debates. Now, where is the time? It is prevented literally by having the sittings from 9 o'clock or 8 o'clock, etc., in the morning. Therefore, I would submit to the Hon. the Speaker to be good enough to change the hour of starting of the session from 9 o'clock in the morning to a reasonable time say, 11 o'clock." 12-10 p.m.

SRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN :—" Sir, if it is not possible to make any change, I would suggest that we may sit in the afternoons from 2-30 and the Upper House may sit in the mornings. They are old and elderly people, they can get up early and they can attend morning sessions."

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* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, the hon. Member, Sri Muthiah Chettiar, assumed in the course of his long and useful speech that 9 a.m. was not a right time to meet. I do not know with what standards he measures these things. I do not see any reason at all to think that the hours you have fixed for the Legislative Assembly meetings, namely, 9 to 1-30 is not the best time of the day for work. It is a time when every member is expected to be vigorous being the first part of the day. We cannot begin earlier than nine. You have fixed 9 to 1-30 and that is the best part of the day. The Upper Chamber will sit in the afternoons—in the fag-end of the day. I think it is a fair distribution. With regard to the views he has expressed on the importance of the interpellations, nobody denies the importance of interpellations. It is in fact the non-official time of the sittings, so to say, everyday for one hour when they have the whole House at their disposal. It is very important and it is a very useful part of the legislature's work. Therefore, it is that 9 to 10, is the best part of the day, is given to that work. I do not see why Mr. Muthiah Chettiar is imagining that 9 o'clock is a difficult time, for that work. But as far as one could judge from the proceedings of the House itself, all the Members are enjoying that one hour thoroughly and most energetically. Any other time would be less useful. As a matter of fact, if the House began at a later hour, the general impression would be that it is a dull House. Therefore, I think that 9 to 1-30 is the best time.

" Sri Muthiah Chettiar went on to suggest various changes in the buildings, accommodation and all that. We can go through them leisurely. It is not possible to do it just now. The question now is whether we meet tomorrow at 9 o'clock. Any change now, Sir, is not convenient."

IV.—POINT OF INFORMATION *RE* THE REPORTED ANNOUNCEMENT OF A VACANCY OF AN ASSEMBLY SEAT IN THE TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT.

SRI K. T. KOSALRAM :—" இந்த சபையின் கௌரவத்தையும் கண்ணியத்தையும் பாதுகாக்கவேண்டிய பொறுப்பு கனம் சபாநாயகர் கையில் இருக்கிறது என்பதை ஞாபகத்தில் கொண்டுவந்து சில விஷயங்களை இங்கு சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன்."

MR. SPEAKER :—" எழுதிக்கொடுத்துவிட்டால் மிகவும் சௌகரியமாக இருக்கும்."

SRI K. T. KOSALRAM :—" ஒரு தொகுதியில், அதுவும் திருநெல்வேலி தொகுதியில் ஒரு மெம்பர் ஸ்தானம் காலியாகபோகின்றது. அதில் திரு. எஸ்.பி. ஆதித்தன் அவர்கள் நிற்கப்போவதாகவும் இந்த சபையில் தலைவராக இருக்கின்ற எனது நண்பர் கனம் மந்திரி ஸி. சுப்ரமண்யம் அவர்கள் சொல்லியிருக்கிறார். இந்த சபையில் இதுவரை ஒரு மெம்பர் ஸ்தானமும் இப்போது காலியாக இல்லை. கோர்ட்டிலிருக்கின்ற விஷயத்தை, இன்னும் அதுபற்றி ஒன்றும் தெரியாத விஷயத்தை இந்த சபை தலைவர் சென்ற மாதம் 31-ந் தேதி மேல் சபையில் பேசியிருக்கிறார். இது ஒழுங்கா ? இவ்வாறு சபைத்தலைவர் சொல்வது நியாயமா ? "